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NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL

HYSTERIA.—An interesting article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* gives Babrinski's definition of Hysteria, "a pathological state manifested by disorders which it is possible to reproduce by suggestion in certain subjects and can be made to disappear by the influence of persuasion alone." The author advocates the rapid re-education of the patient by suggestion, convincing, offered by a practitioner who believes in his own ability to cure the case. He gives a list of sixteen affections successfully treated by this method, including mutism, deafness, stammering, blindness and paraplegia.

GERMAN DRUGS.—The *Medical Record* states that the American Defense Society has given warning of the recent importation into the United States of $12,000,000 worth of drugs of German manufacture. Physicians and druggists are urged to abstain from the use of these drugs, for two reasons: first, the repugnance of loyal Americans to having anything to do with German goods; secondly, because American firms are now manufacturing these drugs and should be upheld against German makers endeavoring to seize the market again and, by underbidding, ruin the new industry. American chemistry, now in the process of emancipation from German dominion, must not be allowed to fall under subjection.

NON-SURGICAL TREATMENT OF EXOPHTHALMIC GOITER.—A writer in the *New York Medical Journal* says that internists who specialize in thyroid gland therapy, cure more than 75 per cent of their cases of hyperthyroidism by dietetic, hygienic, medicinal and electrotherapeutic measures. Hyperthyroidism is not a surgical entity but is a disease which belongs strictly to the realm of the internist. Except in cases where maglignant changes are evident in the thyroid gland, or where there are dangerous pressure symptoms, surgery is distinctly contraindicated.

PROGRESS IN OPHTHALMOLOGY.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* in a synopsis of an article in a Swiss medical journal, states that further progress in Ophthalmology has been realized with röentgen treatment of cancer of the eyelids. The greatest advance in recent years is said to be the treatment of gonorrhea of the eye by subcutaneous injection of 1 c.c. of a typhoid bacilli vaccine, containing five millions, the injection repeated next day or later. The complete cure in a few days of 68 adults is reported.

BLEACHING POWDER IN STERILIZATION.—An Italian medical journal recommends a saturated solution of chlorinated lime for sterilizing the skin. It is said to be efficacious, harmless and unirritating for the disinfection of the hands of physicians and nurses. The Italian term used is *cloruro di calce.*

NEW TREATMENT FOR PARALYSIS AGITANS.—The *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* reports a new method of treatment for paralysis agitans. It consists of simple muscular movements, gone through very slowly, at the rate of about one foot per second, with strong mental concentration on the movement while it is in progress. First the right foot is moved, then the left, then the legs successively, next the right and left arms, separately, then both arms, and finally the hands and fingers. The object is development of nervous control over the muscles. Slowness is essential. One patient suffering from insomnia due to the severe tremor, after six months' treatment, was able to go to sleep in fifteen minutes. After only three treatments a man could hold a newspaper steadily enough to read it.

MASKS IN INFLUENZA.—A writer in a French medical journal mentions that in 1874 he devised a protecting mask for use in diphtheria and malaria; it was put on and worn like a pair of spectacles. The masks were found useful during certain necropsies, and he and his pupils had been using them for forty years.

ETHER DRESSINGS.—The *Paris Medical* reports the usefulness of ether in the irrigation of wounds, especially in rural districts where dressings can be changed infrequently. The fats and certain alkaloids in the wounds are dissolved by the ether and are drawn out of the wound by capillary attraction of the dressing so they are not absorbed and do not serve as a culture medium for microbes. Its principal action is in promoting the auto-sterilization of wounds. The inflamed region is covered with two or three layers of gauze and moistened with ether three times a day. Above this is a sheet of impermeable tissue and a thick pad of carded cotton. The whole is fastened with gauze, loose in the center and tight round the edges. The ether is renewed through a rubber tube, or tubes, left for the purpose under the dressing or by working a tube in each time. The outer end of the tube is kinked to prevent evaporation. The chief use of ether is in preparing a wound for primary suture.